HEALTH

Dementia risk rises with common food type millions eat every day, study suggests

Even a 10% increase in ultraprocessed food intake tied to cognitive effects

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How to lower your Alzheimer's risk, according to Dr. Daniel Amen

The acclaimed psychiatrist and brain disorder specialist explains how everyday choices — from diet and exercise to blood flow — can either protect or accelerate cognitive decline.

It's well-known that ultraprocessed foods (UPFs) are not good for overall health — but new research has uncovered further evidence that this diet could negatively impact the brain.

The study, published in the journal Alzheimer's and Dementia by the Alzheimer's Association, revealed that UPFs are linked to more than 30 adverse health outcomes, including several dementia risk factors, like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and obesity.

Researchers from Australia's Monash University analyzed more than 2,000 dementia-free Australian adults between the ages of 40 and 70, comparing their diets to cognitive function.

BLOOD PRESSURE AND DEMENTIA RISK SHARE SURPRISING LINK, STUDY SUGGESTS

They found that each 10% increase in UPF intake was associated with lower attention scores and higher dementia risk, regardless of whether the adults typically followed a healthy diet, like the Mediterranean diet.

There was no significant link found between UPF consumption and memory.

Each 10% increase in ultraprocessed food intake was associated with lower attention scores and higher dementia risk, the study found. (iStock)

By identifying food processing as a contributor to poorer cognition, the study "supports the need to refine dietary guidelines," the researchers concluded.